LABOUR MONTHLY

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WAR ON THE UNIONS The Editor

HOW TO FIGHT BACK
Christopher Norwood, M.P.
Ernie Roberts
Joan Maynard
D. McGarvey

ISRAEL & THE MIDDLE EAST
awfiq Toubi

COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE
Kotsho Dube, Idris Cox

Muriel Turner on Managers
James Aldridge on E. M. Forster

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Notes of the Month

WAR ON THE UNIONS

'To threaten the trade unions of this country, their members and their officers, with the force of law for doing their job is indefensible, but to do this in the name of socialism is despicable.'

BILL LINDLEY, General Secretary of the Watermen's, Lightermen's, Tugmen's and Bargemen's Union, at the Blackpool Trades Union Congress, September, 1968.

January 20, 1969

The long threatened battle is now joined. The White Paper presented with a deafening blare of official publicity under the title *In Place of Strife—A Policy for Industrial Relations* (the familiar fly-blown euphemism for all anti-union legislation) raises the most serious challenge in modern times for the entire trade union and labour movement. Why has the Wilson-Castle Labour Government entered on this deadly course? What is likely to be the effect in the industrial and political situation? What must be the answer of the trade unions and the political labour movement to this challenge? These questions now dominate the situation in Britain. On subsequent pages we print contributions in answer to these questions from representative trade union and Labour spokesmen; and we have not hesitated to sacrifice or hold over other items planned in order to give priority to this key question which is likely to govern the immediate future of the British Labour Movement.

Soft Soap for the Class War

In vain Mrs. Castle seeks to soothe opposition to the White Paper by presenting it as a mild middle-of-the-road compromise (with special emphasis on the 'sweeteners,' such as money for the unions to help mergers, legal obligations for union recognition by employers, and other proposals), on the grounds that it is criticised 'equally' by the Tories and CBI organisation of the employers, and by 'left-wing trade unionists.' This plea is poppycock. The Tories and employers have made clear that they support entirely the aims of the proposed legislation, and will vote for it in parliament to help the Labour Government defeat any left-wing opposition. Their criticism is solely that they wish to carry further the offensive so conveniently opened for them by the Labour Government. They publicly proclaim their aim to carry it further through the future

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Tory Government which they hope soon to be able to establish on the basis of the anticipated electoral defeat of an anti-union Labour Government. The opposition, on the other hand, is not just a question of some 'left-wing trade unionists,' but has already found reflection in the unanimous rejection of the proposals, put before them in advance of the White Paper, by the General Council of the TUC, right, left and centre (whatever some right-wing leaders may subsequently attempt). It found its decisive expression in the vote of 7,746,000 to 1,022,000 at the last Trades Union Congress in September, which not only called for the repeal of the Prices and Incomes Act, but also declared that Congress 'rejects any further legislation the aim of which would be to curtail basic trade union rights.' This is the declared policy of the organised trade union movement by the democratic vote of the elected delegates of eight million workers (a considerably more representative expression of the class than the anonymous alleged views of a few hundreds or thousands of individuals in newspaper polls, thereafter solemnly presented as the view of 'trade unionists' or 'the workers'). The class confrontation is inescapable. On the one side, the Tories and the employers. On the other side the organised trade union movement. But the Labour Government has placed itself on the wrong side of the fence.

Labour Label—Tory Content

The Labour MP for South Norwich, Christopher Norwood, in his contribution on p. 61, justly points out that the heaviest offensive this century against the trade unions has been launched by a Labour Government. This is the new feature of the present offensive which raises so serious a challenge for every trade unionist and Labour Party supporter. Every previous offensive against the unions has been conducted by the direct representatives of the ruling class, either through a Tory Government or the law courts. The Labour Party has grown on the basis of the fight against these anti-union offensives. It was the fight against the Taff Vale judgment that rallied the unions to the infant Labour Party, prepared the electoral victory of 1906, and thereby won the 1906 Trade Disputes Act, which has ever since been the charter of trade unionism until now a Labour Government is preparing to undo it. With the pledge to repeal the hated Tory 1927 Trade Union Act as a key plank of its programme the Labour Party won its first absolute parliamentary majority in 1945, and as a Government carried through the necessary legislation to restore trade union rights. With a pledge to reverse the

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crippling effect of the Rookes v. Barnard decision the Labour Party won its second largest absolute parliamentary majority in 1966, and followed up, though a little tardily, with the necessary legislation. Why, then, is the Labour Government today reversing its traditional role, tearing at the roots of its own being, and taking over the Tory role in relation to the trade unions? 'A small flag of surrender,' smugly remarks the Tory MP Ian Macleod, on the proposed trade union legislation, and adds his summary of the policy of Mr. Wilson: 'Echoing Disraeli, his new cry is: "Labour men and Tory measures".' The voice may be the voice of Jacob Wilson, but the hands are the hands of Esau Heath. Mr. Heath has publicly expressed his pleasure and his intention to support the offensive while pressing for more.

Tory Campaign

Any examination of the sequence of events would show how the Labour Government has been successively harried and hounded forward by the clamour of Toryism and the big press to adopt procedures and measures of Tory and American inspiration against the unions. The Labour Government has been continuously denounced for being 'soft' to the unions, taunted with financial dependence on the unions, upbraided for a lax attitude to strikes and wage demands. So came the Prices and Incomes legislation; the coercive powers to freeze wage increases; and the Donovan Commission to review trade union law. In May came the engineers' 24 hour strike, with the unexampled demonstration of working class solidarity and readiness to respond to a lead for action. In June came the report of the Donovan Commission, which prepared the way for the present legislative attack, with its analysis of the 'two systems' in industrial relations, the national trade union level and the effective workshop level; its estimation that 95 per cent of strikes were 'unofficial' or 'unconstitutional'; and its recommendation that these 95 per cent of strikes should be deprived of the legal protection provided by the 1906 Act. At the same time the Donovan Report exposed the fallacy of the cruder panaceas beloved by sections of the Tory press and propagandists (and subsequently adopted by the Labour Government) such as the compulsory secret ballot before a national strike. *The Times* Labour correspondent, Eric Whigham, who was a member of the Donovan Commission, commented on the Labour Government's adoption of the proposal for the compulsory secret ballot before a strike, and explained the reason why many of the big employers were opposed to it:

> Experience in the United States and Canada and Germany is that strike

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> ballots almost invariably result in massive support for action (*Times*, Jan. 2, 1969)

The CBI and Tory press proceeded to denounce the Donovan Report as too mild; 'a disappointment' said the CBI. The call was sounded for stronger measures.

Tory Calculations

In reply to this campaign the TUC at the beginning of September cast its vote of eight millions to one million to oppose any new legislative interference with trade union rights. Immediately after this vote the Conservative Conference at the end of September set out in concrete terms its marching orders for the Government to carry out legislative interference with trade union rights. Thus the Labour Government was faced with the choice between two opposite paths. A prolonged Cabinet huddle followed. The outcome was the White Paper. The Labour Government rejected the path of the trade union movement. It chose the path of concessions to the demands of Toryism and the employers. The consequence was inevitable. Throwing the baby to the wolves is never the most effective way of keeping off the wolves. The taste of the baby only increases the appetite of the wolves. The Tories were jubilant. Patronisingly they praised the 'courage' of Mrs. Castle and the Labour Cabinet in facing up to the wrath of the trade unions and Labour's left. At the same time they contemptuously indicated that this could only be regarded as a first instalment. 'A mouse is better than no mouse at all,' said the *Daily Telegraph*. 'Half a loaf is better than no bread,' said the *Financial Times*. 'Half a step onwards,' proclaimed the *Economist*. They were all serenely confident that, after the Labour Government had thus so compliantly opened the door and spiked the opposition of the trade unions, a Tory Government in the near future would be able to complete the job:

> Since the Conservative Party is likely before long to be the party in power, we may expect that Labour's measures will be followed by others (*Times*, Jan. 18, 1969).

Indeed, the *Economist* had already set out the strategy at the beginning of the month, on the basis of the preliminary indications before the publication of the White Paper:

> There is good hope that once a Labour Government has given the first necessary inch, a later Conservative Government may pluck up more courage to go the eventually necessary ell (*Economist*, Jan. 4, 1969).

You have been warned.

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Strength of Trade Unionism

The British trade union movement, the oldest in the world, has only maintained its existence in the face of ceaseless attacks from its inception by its ability to resist and finally defeat those attacks on the basis of the class solidarity of the workers. Despite all the weaknesses derived from the historical conditions of its growth, it has survived and grown in strength and numbers, when the names of all those who have sought to crush it or destroy its rights have been forgotten. In celebration of the centenary of the TUC George Woodcock broadcast in June last year:

> For some fifty years or more after Congress was first established the efforts of the TUC were directed against attempts by the courts to impose legal restrictions on the trade unions . . . And these are still matters of concern (*Listener*, June 13, 1968).

He could have carried the story back further than the foundation of the TUC. The baptism of fire of trade unionism was the long and heroic struggle of the pioneers against the notorious Combination Acts adopted in 1799-1800 as the expression of the counter-revolutionary frenzy of the British ruling class in face of the French Revolution. Even after repeal was extorted in 1824 a new Act was passed in the following year to hold the unions still subject to the common law of conspiracy against restraint of trade. The battle for the rights of the unions went forward, and has continued to go forward to the present day.

Long Battle of Trade Unionism

After the victory of 1824 against the union-smashers the pioneers of trade unionism raised their sights, and in the constitution of the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union set the ambitious aim, not only to win increased wages and shorter hours, but to change the social order by winning power for the working class: to bring about 'a Different Order of Things, in which the really useful and intelligent part of society only shall have the direction of its affairs.' This noble ambition was premature in the conditions of the time, before even Marxism had appeared on the scene, and ended in defeat. But after the defeat the skilled workers tenaciously built up their organisation in new forms corresponding to the conditions of dominant nineteenth century capitalism, rebuffed successive attacks, won gains in conditions, and co-operated, on the part of many unions and leaders, with Marx in the First International. The renewed upper

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class offensive let loose through the Royal Commission of 1867 was followed by the foundation of the Trades Union Congress in 1868, brought into being by the initiative of the trades councils and the left wing against the opposition of the right-wing Junta. When the decline of British capitalism began in the eighties, the rebirth of socialism followed, and union organisation extended to the unskilled in a series of heroic battles, led by the Marxists. The TUC joined with all the socialist organisations to found the Labour Party (again after a long and bitter battle of the left against the right-wing leadership, who opposed independent working class politics), and on this basis of combined economic and political action defeated the new offensive of the Taff Vale judgment by the House of Lords. A new upsurge of militancy followed during the years 1910-14, with the beginnings of reorganisation of many of the unions in the direction of industrial unionism through the initiative of the left, and swept further forward through the wartime struggles of the shop stewards and workers' committees, and in the years from 1919 to Red Friday in 1925. The capitalist class under Baldwin set itself to smash this advance by a conspiracy with the right-wing leadership for the provocation and betrayal of the general strike of 1926. They followed up the victory by imposing the shackles of the Tory Trade Union Act of 1927 and by the policies of Mondism to stifle the unions in permanent alliance with the employers and entangle them in the machinery of the capitalist state. Today once again the strength and fighting determination of the unions has risen, with numbers and solidarity exceeding any previous phase, and with manifest advance of the left at every level, from the factories and elections to key union posts to representation on the General Council of the TUC. Once again the anti-union offensive is let loose.

Ruling Class Hatred of Trade Unions

However much they may seek to cover it up today with smooth language in the face of strength, the basic ruling class hatred of militant trade unionism remains, which in the old days they expressed in the open. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* of 1823 carried an article on 'Combinations' by the foremost governing class economist of the day, McCullogh, who declared of trade unions:

> Nothing but the merest ignorance could make it supposed that wages could really be increased by such proceedings.

The Act of 1825, which sought to undo the effect of the repeal of

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the Combination Acts in the preceding year, laid down that trade unions are

> injurious to trade and commerce, dangerous to the tranquillity of the country, and especially prejudicial to the interests of all concerned in them.

The Webbs, writing in 1897, described the typical outlook of the upper class or 'educated' public in relation to trade unions thirty years earlier, that is, in 1867, the year of the publication of *Capital:*

> Down to within the last thirty years it would have been taken for granted by every educated man that Trade Unionism as a means of bettering the condition of the workman, was 'against Political Economy' . . . For the first three quarters of the century we find, beyond the accustomed denunciation of outrages and strikes, practically nothing but a general and undiscriminating hostility to Trade Unionism in the abstract, couched in the language of theoretical economics.
>
> Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Industrial Democracy*, 1897, p. 603.

Dr. Arnold, the headmaster of Rugby and father of the modern public school system, wrote to a friend during the eighteen-thirties (quoted in Hutt's classic *Short History of British Trade Unionism, 1800-1961*):

> You have heard, I doubt not, of the Trades Unions: a fearful engine of mischief, ready to riot or to assassinate; and I see no counteracting power.

Of course all that is changed now. Honey drips out of their mouths when they speak of the trade unions today, or talk to the big union leaders. But the honey still contains the poison, more cunningly concealed than in the old days when they openly expressed their hatred.

Attempts to Tame the Unions

After the strength of trade unionism and working class solidarity has made it impossible for them to fulfil their original aims to destroy the unions, they have pursued, alongside the occasional big stick and showdown, the parallel strategy to seek to take the unions into their embrace, to suffocate their functioning in an increasingly complex web of dilatory 'conciliation' machinery, and to entangle their upper leadership in permanent alliances with the employers and in highly paid positions in the machinery of the capitalist state. The price has gone up. In mid-Victorian days a top trade union leader might be fobbed off with the position of a Groom of the Bedchamber. By 1886 the Lib-Lab Secretary of the TUC, Henry Broadhurst (who was accused by the left of collaboration with

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Brunner, Mond & Co., the predecessor of Imperial Chemical Industries, thus carrying a hint of a foretaste of Mondism) rose to the height of a position of Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office in the Gladstone Ministry, and published his complacent memoirs in 1901 under the title *From Stonemason's Bench to the Treasury Bench.* By 1906 John Burns, former leader of the militant upsurge of the new unionism, became a Cabinet Minister in the Liberal Government. Today of course a General Secretaryship, once seen as the height of possible trade union ambition, is now regarded as merely a stepping stone to one of the proliferating high and lucrative positions on a Nationalised Corporation or other State Board. But this advance of individuals (which the coarse-mouthed Lenin used to call the corruption of the top reformist leadership) is only the outward expression of the key strategy to tie up the official trade union machinery with the capitalist state machine. With the first world war this process swept forward. Mondism between the wars brought a further phase. With the second world war and the subsequent advance of capitalist nationalisation and state monopoly capitalism this has become an elaborate system. All the theorists of right-wing trade unionism have ever since the thirties poured forth a flood of literature to boast that the trade unions have now become a recognised integral part of the (capitalist) state. And yet at the end of it all, with all these successes, the leaders of capitalism have discovered with loud dismay that the prize has eluded them; that militant trade unionism is not yet dead, but alive and kicking; that the class struggle continues.

Workshop Democracy

What the leaders of capitalism and strategists of capitalist policy are now realising—and this is the key to the present offensive, the Donovan Report, the Government's White Paper, the Conservative plan, the press clamour, and all the rest of it—is that, even when they think they have successfully tied up the national trade union machinery in all kinds of elaborate entangling agreements and class-peace policies, the spirit of militant trade unionism, of working class solidarity and action, lives on in the workshop, on the factory floor, with far more direct and speedy democratic expression of the wishes of the workers than the often cumbersome national machinery, and can make hay of all the elaborate devices to put fetters on the workers, freeze their wages and impede their action. The demonstration of this situation came to the front already with the first world war. Before 1914 the shop stewards were still in general only the separate

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subordinate elected representatives of a particular union in a particular factory to collect dues and fulfil minor functions. But with the war of 1914 the top trade union leadership adopted the policy of the Industrial Truce, surrendered the right to strike in the Treasury Agreement of February, 1915; and the Munitions of War Act of that year prohibited strikes. Thus the workers' struggle could only be carried forward by the elected shop stewards of the various unions in a given factory coming together in a joint committee, uniting all the trade unionists of the different unions in one factory. These democratically elected joint shop stewards' committees in a factory came together with similar committees in other factories in a district for joint action, the first example being the famous Clyde Withdrawal of Labour Committee in 1915, which became the Clyde Workers Committee; and similar committees developed in other districts. Despite police persecution and imprisonment of leaders the workers' struggle was carried forward through these committees; and the impotence of legal prohibition of strikes to prevent strikes was demonstrated. This experience was carried further forward during the second world war, and in the modern period. These joint shop stewards' committees have never been alternatives to the trade unions, since their basis of organisation is the union, but have provided the most effective democratic expression of the workers for immediate issues in the factory, or for speedy mobilisation and action where the national machinery may be retarded or tied up.

Concentration of the New Offensive on the Factories

Hence the special new feature of the present anti-union offensive is that it is directed, not only against national trade union rights and functioning, with coercive powers to compel secret ballots and intervene in union relations and structure, but also, and with special concentration, against militant trade unionism in the factories. Here is seen the gap in the carefully devised system by which the strategists of capitalism had sought to tie up the unions nationally in elaborately prolonged negotiating procedure or to entangle them in the machinery of the capitalist state. This is the gap which they are now determined to close. Thus the Donovan Report made its main point the exposure of 'two systems' of industrial relations, the 'formal system' on the national negotiating basis, and the 'informal system,' but often the most practically effective one, on the workshop floor. Therefore they highlighted the fact that 95 per cent of strikes were 'unofficial,' and that this was the problem which required new legislation to bring the 'informal system' under control, since the

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existing situation served to 'inflate the power of work groups and shop stewards within the factory.' Accordingly they recommended the replacement of the existing method of national industry-wide agreements on hours and conditions by local agreements reached at company and factory levels. On the same lines the White Paper has repeated that '95 per cent of strikes are unofficial, and of these most are unconstitutional.' It is in relation to these so-called 'unofficial' or 'unconstitutional' strikes arising in a factory, that is, nineteen strikes out of twenty, that the Government proposes to take powers to impose a 28 day prohibition, euphemistically called a 'conciliation pause.'

Blow at Shop Stewards' Role

There is no concealment against whom the blow is being aimed. The White Paper criticises the present situation, in which 'an increasing amount of bargaining is settled outside the formal system by shop stewards and management at work-place level,' on the grounds that this plays into the hands of 'minority groups who can exploit their strategic position.' Who said Reds? Accordingly it is proposed to solve this problem, and defeat this danger, by incorporating this role of the factory into the formal system in the same way as the national trade union machinery has been incorporated, and to transfer the collective negotiation of wage rates and conditions from a national basis to a new system of 'negotiation of formal, comprehensive and authoritative company or factory agreements.' The reactionary implications of this proposal are manifest. The workers are to be separated and split up by factories or companies for wage settlements, in place of the national rate being supplemented by factory bargaining. Each trust can make the terms it finds expedient in a given economic situation or relation of forces, while the weakest go to the wall. The vital principle of trade unionism, as opposed to company unionism, that it cuts across company divisions to unite the workers and confront the employers on an independent basis, is infringed. The independence of the shop stewards' committee, responsible only to the workers who elect them and the unions they represent, is to be destroyed by turning them into organs of a state-controlled system under the supervision of Industrial Boards or Commissions. The factory is the fortress of working class organisation. The independent functioning of the shop stewards' committees, as an integral part of trade union organisation, is crucial for the strength and future of the industrial working class movement.

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Big Business Clamours for 'Industrial Unionism'

The whirligig of time brings its revenges. Since over half a century ago, notably in the years of upsurge before the first world war, the militant workers conducted the most energetic campaign, not without some successes, to transform the inherited obsolescent and mixed-up craft and general union structure into industrial unions as the most efficient fighting organisation to confront big capital. At that time all the employers, the ruling capitalist parties and the official press frowned on such revolutionary notions to disturb the cosy ancient structure of British trade unionism, whose weaknesses they found pleasant. Now in the era of giant ultra-monopolies and state monopoly capitalism they have changed their tune. They find the ramshackle structure, multiplication of unions and demarcation disputes a nuisance. So they want to streamline, or, in their delightful technocratic jargon, 're-structure' the unions into what they are pleased to call 'industrial unionism' as the only rational form of organisation for the purpose of big business. Of course what they mean by 'industrial unionism' is very far from what militant trade unionists have meant and mean by the term. They mean that each mammoth trust should have 'its own' union as its rational counterpart for purposes of smooth labour relations, the whole being integrated into a state-regulated system of rationalised industrial relations appropriate to state monopoly capitalism. And if the White Paper describing 'A Policy for Industrial Relations' is carefully studied, with its criticisms of the multiplicity of unions and establishment of a state institution to promote the reorganisation of the unions, and supervise their constitutions, or new additional state powers to control the functioning of the unions, freeze strikes and impose fines which shall be deducted from wages, or the institution of 'authoritative' company and plant agreements, it is remarkable how closely the whole line of direction corresponds to the present aims of Big Business, pointing towards what some critics have called 'the Corporate State.'

Trade Unions and Politics

The whole character of the present offensive shows how closely intertwined is the economic and political struggle of trade unionism today. Engels long ago at an early stage described the significance of the role of the trade unions:

> What gives these Unions and the strikes arising from them their real importance is this, that they are the first attempt of the workers to abolish competition. They imply the recognition of the fact that the supremacy of

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> the bourgeoisie is based wholly upon the competition of the workers among themselves; i.e. upon their want of cohesion. And precisely because the Unions direct themselves against the vital nerve of the present social order, however one-sidedly, in however narrow a way, are they so dangerous to this social order.
>
> Engels, *Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*, ch. viii 'Labour Movements.' pp. 218-19

It was the necessity of political action to defeat the attacks on trade union rights and to promote the aims of trade unionism which led the trade unions to unite with the socialists to found the Labour Party and carry forward its advance to its present majority position. If today the child of their own creation has now turned upon them to launch the latest and most far reaching offensive yet against trade union rights, it is all the more imperative for the trade unions to exercise all their political strength, and above all the political strength which they have it in their power to exercise within the Labour Party, to defeat this offensive and compel the reversal of this policy. The call to the battle has sounded. The first critical round of this battle opens on February 27 with the Conference of Trade Union Executives, the call of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions for trade unionists to lobby that Conference, and the call of the Scottish Miners and other working class bodies for a one-day national strike. The testing time is here for the whole future of the trade union and labour movement.

R.P.D.

LABOUR MONTHLY FORTY YEARS AGO

The rationalisation offensive, as it may be called, exhibits certain characteristics very different from the attacks in the period immediately following the war. Then the demand was for a national reduction of so many shillings a week or pence per hour, the crisis was acute but brief, and a period of stabilisation at the lower rate followed.

Now the attack is continuous. The worker is never free from the pressure from one week to another. New methods, new technical arrangements, time saving, speeding-up, new machines, still more re-arrangements, each accompanied by dismissals and cuts, short time and intensive piecework, until not even the most conservative craftsman can have the old feeling of security in his job. A few shillings a week difference on the craftsman's rate does not after all matter so much—as long as he is sure of it—but the rationalisation offensive is everywhere aiming to cut out the craft process and bring on the semi-skilled and unskilled man.

(From 'Resisting Rationalisation,'
by John A. Mahon, *Labour Monthly*, February 1929).

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HOW TO FIGHT BACK

Christopher Norwood, M.P.

LOOKING back over the last four years the Labour Government's policy towards the trade union movement shows an all-too-clear pattern. Yet it is a pattern which many people in the Labour Party still refuse to face. Stripped of all the statements at trade union conferences, of the declarations of intent on prices and profits, the policy of this Government is the most anti-trade union of any government this century.

If anyone had predicted in September or October 1964 that a Labour Government would have attempted to control free negotiation between unions and employers in the employers' interest, to hold down the wages of the lower-paid worker, prevaricated over equal pay and brought in legislation to threaten legal penalties against the active trade unionist, he or she would have been laughed at. Yet it has happened.

The Government has seen its task as the placation of the great businesses, the preservation of the rate of exchange and the pursuit of the goodwill of foreign financial interests. All these are interconnected and in each respect the policy has failed even by its own lights. To achieve these aims the Labour Government believed it had to restrict working-class and ordinary middle-class living standards. Its answer to the failure of its policies has not been to change the policies or methods, but to redouble their intensity.

It is against this background that Mrs. Castle's recent proposals and discussions with trade unions and Confederation of British Industry leaders must be seen. The proposals go way beyond, and are in conflict with the recent report of the Donovan Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, but this is not in itself important since the Donovan Report is a far from impressive document. It is the nature of the proposals themselves that is significant.

Two of the proposals in particular stand out as vital, both for their immediate consequences and for their long-term implications. These are the proposals for a secret ballot before official strikes and, more important, the suggestion of a 'cooling off' period before unofficial strikes. These measures are not, it would appear, to be general; it will be left to whoever happens to be the Minister of Employment and Productivity to decide when they shall be brought

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into effect. In other words the Minister will decide when she or he wishes to interfere. If the decision to interfere is made then it will be backed by legal sanctions.

The immediate importance is this: by implication strikes are wrong, thus by implication the employer is right and his decisions (or those of his managers and personnel officials) are the decisions that are in the 'national interest'. The purpose of these measures is plain, it is to make strikes more difficult. With each proposal the employer (and the Press by and large) will be given time to exhort and cajole his employees, to divide one group of workers against another, to seek out possible blackleg labour, to lay in stocks, to buy from abroad and to strengthen his bargaining position in every possible way. The inevitable effect, and this no doubt is the Government's intention, will be to strengthen the employers' hand in any dispute.

It may well be that these proposals will not work in the way in which they are intended. An unofficial strike may well be under way by the time the necessary formalities to order a 'cooling off' period have been carried out, and by this time it is unlikely that the strikers will return to work. Some or all of the strikers may then be fined, and the fines (so we are told) collected by the employer after the return to work. One can easily see a number of ways by which a determined group of people could make this procedure ineffective. When, for instance, does a work-to-rule become a strike? Who would really pay the fines?

It is, however, no defence for supporters of the Government proposals to argue that they will not or may not work, that they are intended to placate overseas financial interests, even though this is true. It is now clear that if these steps are not effective in the eyes of the Government then further measures will be introduced. Already the CBI leaders have indicated that the proposals do not go far enough. The long-term implications are even more serious. The proposals are the final declaration on the part of the Government that it intends to determine the conclusion of any industrial negotiations it selects and that it intends to do this by supporting the interest of the employer against the welfare of the employee.

This Government has come down in favour of a view of the 'national interest' which treats the claims of capital and its owners as of paramount importance and the claims of the mass of the population, the employed man or woman and his or her family as of secondary importance at best. To do this it is prepared to cut at the roots of the only organisations protecting the employee. It

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is not too difficult to see how any future Conservative government can build upon the foundations laid by the present Labour one.

The trade union movement is now under attack to an extent unparalleled for many years. It is idle to hope that the Parliamentary Labour Party will reject the current series of proposals, or regrettably, the thinking that lies behind them. The movement must oppose the proposals in every possible way, since the long-term consequences of failure to retain its independence will be to allow any and every government to dictate the wages and conditions of every group of employees, while allowing profits and rents untramelled increases.

Ernie Roberts*

ONCE again the organisations of the working class are under attack by the Government, big business and their hand-maidens the press, radio and TV.

Any harm done to the trade unions will also harm the non-trade unionists whose wages and standard of life are defended and extended by trade union actions.

The Sunday Times claims to speak out the real opinion of trade unions. They have conducted an opinion poll of 516 trade union members. *The Sunday Times* now knows the feelings of trade unions. This is the sort of fatuous rubbish put as news and fact. Don't they know there are over 11 million persons in trade unions? 9 million of these are represented by the TUC, who decided at the 1968 Congress by 7 to 1 to tell the Government to get rid of its oppressive Prices & Incomes Act.

Doesn't the press know that our AEF Union's 1,150,000 members through its rank and file National Committee have decided to oppose all anti-trade union legislations? That the democratically elected Executive Council of the AEF have decided to oppose the restrictive, crippling and legislative proposals that Barbara Castle and employers are thrusting upon the Unions.

Workers know they are compelled to organise in order to defend themselves, to protect and extend their living standards.

They have done this against the organised opposition of their employers and the power of the State which the employing class have always used. For 150 years they have built their unions, national and local, without the assistance of State or employers.

* Ernie Roberts, as many of our readers know, is an Assistant General Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering and Foundry Workers.

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The unions have arisen out of conflict with the State and the employers—today our trade unions are powerful bodies.

The employers and Tory Party have been disturbed for some years by the strength of the organised working class. A group of Tory lawyers have written a book under the title of *Giant in Chains*. There have been many efforts to chain, by legislation, the trade union movement. The workers using their organising strength on the shop floor have been able to force increased wages out of the rising profits from their reluctant employers.

Often these increases are in excess of the rates of pay negotiated nationally and they are attacked as 'wage drift,' (not to be confused with profit accumulation!).

Our present Labour Government like the previous Tory Government when faced with an 'economic crisis,' immediately turns its attack upon the living standards of the working people.

Today this takes the form of the so called 'Prices & Incomes Policy.' The Government and employers are looking for ways and means to restrict the consumption of the workers and their families; restrictive legislation against engineers, building trade workers and trade unions are one of the ways they have used. This is the background against which we must consider the anti-trade union legislation now being prepared by the Government. The main reason for this proposed legislation is to stop what they call wage drift and the inflationary pressure of wages upon the economy.

The most powerful point of pressure by the workers is at the point of production. It is there where the trade union member and his shop steward are most active. The aim is to shackle these workers and threaten them with legal action, if they dare to use their vital weapon, their right to strike, to fine them if necessary. There are suggestions that such fines should be stopped from workers' wages by their employers. The Government is prepared to take legal action to restrict wages, but allows profits—share value inflations (30 per cent up in 1968).

High fees for directors are to continue freely upwards, whilst 90 per cent of the total personal wealth in Britain is in the hands of the top rich 10 per cent. Trade unions must be left free to defend and extend the standard of living of the working people.

The suggestion of employers and politicians to make trade union agreements enforceable by law is for the purpose of freezing wages at the basic level of such agreements throughout the country. The law would be based on slowest, lowest and worst.

The proposal of a cooling-off period such as exists in the USA

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under the Taft-Hartley Act where strikes are more prevalent in spite of the Act, is just another twisted proposition. Do they intend to make the employer cool off for 90 days before he sacks the shop steward? or to cool off before he cuts the price on the job?

The York Memorandum, otherwise the Procedure for Avoidance of Disputes between Engineering Trade Unions and Engineering Employers' Federation, compels more than a cooling-off period. Our members are frozen after negotiations which drag on for months and sometimes a year on matters upon which the employers have already taken direct action. The workers experience is that an hour's stoppage produces a quick settlement. To make strike action illegal is equivalent to making trade unions illegal and takes us back to the days of the Anti-Combination Acts. The Government and national press have been campaigning for compulsory strike ballots (750,000 of our members voted with their feet and heads in a one day strike in support of our recent national wage negotiations). There was almost a 16 months 'cooling-off period' during these negotiations, during which time the engineering employers saved themselves approximately £100 million. Let me quote the Donovan Report on this matter:

Paragraph 426. 'A number of witnesses have suggested to us that a secret ballot should be required before a strike can lawfully take place. This proposal is based on the belief that workers are likely to be less militant than their leaders and that, given the opportunity of such a ballot, they would often be likely to vote against strike action.'

Paragraph 427. 'It is clear that the scope of any legislation to this end, if it were to be effective, would have to be confined to major official strikes. A law forbidding strike action before the holding of a secret ballot could not be enforced in the case of small-scale unofficial stoppages, which make up the overwhelming majority of the total number of strikes.'

Paragraph 428. 'There is little justification in the available evidence for the view that workers are less likely to vote for strike action than their leaders; and findings from our workshop relations survey, already cited, confirm this.'

Trade unionists are intelligent enough to conduct their own ballots in their own democratic way without legal interference.

Production and exports are damaged it is claimed by strikes and this is the reason the employers and Government give for their pressure for anti-trade union legislation. The fact is that this country lost considerably more production due to sickness, industrial accidents and unemployment. The Executive Council of our union,

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the AEF, has carried a resolution which in effect says that in line with National Committee policy the Executive Council will resist any legislation that restricts our members' right to strike.

We must discuss this matter in the thousands of trade union branches, district and area committees: Send your decisions to the Executive Councils of your unions: Inform the TUC General Council and call for the re-calling of the TUC: Urge that this matter be discussed by the meeting of Joint Trade Union Executive Councils to be held in February in Croydon.

To remain voiceless on this issue is to acquiesce. So in your interest speak out now. If we are to defend our democratic trade union rights we must use our organised strength.

Joan Maynard

Vice President, National Union of Agricultural Workers

THE trade union movement will have to put up a determined fight against the proposals in the White Paper, or we shall lose what we have fought so hard for over many years.

Daniel McGarvey

President, The Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers, Shipwrights, Blacksmiths and Structural Workers

THE trade union movement has been under constant attack by the Tory Party since the movement's inception. This has always been something that was taken for granted, as the Tory Party was more or less the visible representative of capitalist reaction to the organised strength of the trade union movement. Of course, the national press have always attacked the trade unions and have wanted their powers restricted by legislation. It was in such a recurring atmosphere of these pressures on the trade union movement that the Donovan Commission was set up by the Labour Government, and all the anti-trade union perverts rubbed their hands in glee as they thought at long last we would have a Government Commission Report to put these trade unions in their proper place, *that is, subservient to the Establishment;* but lo and behold, the Donovan Report came out firmly against trade union legislation. Added to this the Trades Union Congress voted seven million to one million

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against any further legislation which would restrict trade union rights and principles, and for good measure the Labour Party Conference voted five-and-a-half million to one million against on a similar resolution. One was therefore entitled to expect that a Labour Government would have rejected the idea of using the heavy hand of the State with regards to the trade union movement, but according to Mrs. Barbara Castle the opposite is the case, and in my opinion she is hell bent on clobbering the trade unions. What her reasons are is difficult to understand: one of them may be that the old Bevanite clan of which she was a prominent member, and there are quite a few in the Cabinet, had a deep hatred of the power of the trade union movement and are paying off old scores, another, maybe, that if a secret ballot were taken of trade union leaders it is possible she would be voted the worst Minister dealing with industrial relations of modern times; of course, whatever the reasons for her determination to exterminate democracy these should not deter trade unionists and all democrats from fighting back. Men have died in two world wars to preserve democracy and we cannot stand aside and see a silent takeover of our democratic way of life—even by a Labour Government.

The trade union movement must organise all its resources against the Government on this major issue and it is no good being mealy-mouthed about the principle at stake—it is the desire of this Government by their actions to become a 'Corporate State'; anybody who says anything to the contrary is only playing with words. The General Council have made a good start to the battle by unanimously rejecting Mrs. Barbara Castle's proposals. Follow this up by contacting your MPs demanding 'Hands of the trade unions.' If the Government are prepared to commit political suicide then we must not allow them to murder the trade union movement in the process.

(This article is reprinted, with permission, from the Society's Monthly Report for January)

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ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Tawfiq Toubi
Member of Knesset (Israeli Parliament)

ON the second day after the announcement of the US State Department confirming the final arrangements for supplying Israel with 50 Phantom fighter-bomber planes, Israeli forces on December 28, 1968, raided the civilian international airport of Beirut, and destroyed 14 Lebanese passenger planes and other airport installations.

This Israeli military raid on the Lebanon is a stepping-up of what the Israeli authorities call 'punitive actions' against the Arab countries, with the officially declared pretext of 'putting an end to Palestinian Arab armed attacks against Israeli forces and objectives'.

The continued Israeli occupation of Arab territories, following upon the last June 1967 war, intensifies and strengthens growing resistance of the people of the occupied territories supported by the Arab countries. Extremist and terrorist actions similar to attacking a civilian Israeli plane in the Athens airport or placing explosives in a public market street in the Israeli part of Jerusalem have been justly condemned by Israeli peace forces and cause harm to the just resistance against occupation.

These Israeli raids and military expeditions against neighbouring Arab countries are actually a continuation of the long chain of high-handed policy and show of force practised by the Israeli ruling circles which culminated in the 1956 tripartite attack against Egypt and in the June 1967 war against Egypt, Jordan and Syria. This outburst of force characterising the Israeli ruling circles' policy towards the Arab countries, while calculated to serve the expansionist schemes of the Zionist leaders and to impose newly-created facts of expulsion and occupation, have always intermingled and constituted part and parcel of imperialist scheming against the Arab national liberation movement.

Israeli air-raids on Jordanian (East Bank) villages and towns have become nowadays nearly a daily occurrence. The consecutive raids at the beginning of December against the towns of Irbid, El-Mafraq, against encampments of Iraqi troops stationed in Jordan, the raid on the village of Kufr-Asad with the resulting killing of dozens of civilians, are now repeated more often. Following upon an Israeli air-raid and artillery shelling of Jordanian villages

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in the East Bank of Jordan in the middle of February 1968, the Israeli Chief-of-Staff Bar-Lev stated to the military reporter of the afternoon daily *Ma'ariv* (February 19, 1968):

> We shall be able to impose a settlement on Jordan, if we know how to use our military power in such a way as to force Hussein to the table of negotiations. We succeeded in enforcing the cessation of fire by the strength of fire last week, and he did it because of lack of alternative. We shall be able to enforce a political solution on him, if we compel him to ask for it because of lack of alternative. This will be possible only if we shall be on the other side of the border line.

In accordance with this line the militarists in our country do not miss any opportunity, do not let any pretext pass away without exploiting it for bringing down a blow on this Arab country or that, utilising their military superiority, and every blow is politically calculated. One blow to add to the chaos and instability and enforce Hussein, in the absence of any alternative, to accept a separate peace of surrender. Another blow to demonstrate the weakness and military incapacity of Arab solidarity and raise doubts and suspicion amongst the Arab countries themselves. Another blow calculated to serve imperialist pressure or manoeuvring against this or that Arab country. Another blow to create an intolerable situation where Arab countries, particularly the United Arab Republic would be drawn to an unequal battle which may bring about the desired aims. And so on and so forth.

All this critical situation becomes still more explosive because of the obstinate refusal of the Israeli ruling circles to accept and agree with the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967. Despite their unsuccessful efforts to subdue growing Arab resistance, they still seek to impose upon the Arab countries their own capitulatory 'peace', which would turn the present occupation into lasting annexation.

Although the lightning military victory of June 1967 did not make the 'telephone of Dayan's office ring with the voice of Arab leaders at the other end of the line asking him for his terms for a capitulatory settlement', according to Dayan's declared expectation, and in spite of the failure of the imperialist aims of the June war—the toppling of the anti-imperialist regimes in Egypt and Syria—neither the Israeli leaders nor the USA strategists have given up these aims.

The Israeli ruling circles, with the political military backing of the USA administration, continue their intransigence, refusing to comply with the UN Security Council Resolution. This Resolution

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does not only reject annexations as a result of the use of force and demand the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories, but also calls for the ending of the state of war between states of the region, for recognising the right of all states (including Israel) to sovereign existence within recognised and secure borders, for the settlement of the refugee problem and for the ensuring of free navigation for all states in international water passages of the region. The fact that the UAR, Jordan and the Lebanon officially expressed their readiness for a settlement of the crisis on the basis of implementing this UN Security Council Resolution presents a golden opportunity for the people of Israel to change the explosive course of events now threatening and to pass over to a new course which would lead to peace and security.

The fact that there are still certain nationalist extremist circles within the Arab countries whose declared policy is the elimination of Israel and others like the Syrian Government who refuse to carry out the Security Council Resolution which Dr. Gunnar Jarring is trying to implement not only harms the just cause of the Palestine Arab people but also gives Israeli official propaganda a pretext for its aggressive, expansionist policy. Such positions amongst certain Arab nationalist circles are also detrimental to the struggle of the anti-imperialist and democratic forces within Israel against the policy of the Israeli Government.

However, while these extreme and ultra-nationalist positions are bred by the aggression of the Israeli ruling circles they are not the dominating factor, either in the Arab countries or within the Arab national movement. The anti-imperialist UAR Government, which holds a dominant position within the Arab world, showed that it was for a just peaceful settlement without annexations by accepting the UN Security Council Resolution and calling for its full implementation. The Jordanian Government adopted a similar position. Anti-imperialist and democratic popular forces in the Arab countries stand for a just and peaceful settlement. Even Israeli leaders cannot now hide the fact that it is possible to reach a settlement if they agreed to a withdrawal of troops.

M. Dayan, the Minister of Security, as far back as January 19, 1968, declared in an interview with the daily paper *Ha'aretz*:

> 'May be that Abdel Nasser will be prepared, with or without Hussein, to come to an agreement with us under the condition that we withdraw to the old borders. If we withdraw to the borders of June 4, Abdel Nasser may agree to end the state of war, to free navigation in the Gulf of Eilat and may be even, to a certain extent, in the Suez Canal. If we withdraw to the former

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armistice-lines this would solve the problems with Egypt to a great extent.' The interviewer from *Ha'aretz* asked further: 'And you, are you not for such a solution?' Dayan's answer was categorical: 'I am absolutely against it.'

Also the Prime Minister, Mr. L. Eshkol, declared in the Knesset (Israeli Parliament), while replying to a political debate on November 12, 1968:

> Of course, if we speak with the Arabs about returning to the situation as it was prior to May 1967, it would be very easy to arrive at a settlement.

The policy of the Israeli ruling circles, dominated by Zionist ideology and practice, has always obstructed a peaceful settlement between Israel and the Arab countries.

Addressing a gathering of youth of the Mapai Kibbutz movement in El-Hamma (near the Golan Syrian heights occupied after the June 1967 war) on July 5, 1968, M. Dayan said (according to the evening daily *Yediot Ahronot*, July 12, 1968, and reported in *Lamerchav* daily on July 7, 1968):

> Ever since the return to Zion 100 years ago, two processes continue: colonisation and extension of the borders. In such a way, the people in Israel grew from 600,000 in 1948 to nearly three million in our days. But this is not the end of the road and not the full-stop. This is a process which must continue: it is the people of Israel who will determine the borders of the state.

Consolidating and integrating the new occupied territories as part of Israel this is what is occupying the minds of the rulers of Israel and not how to reach peace with their neighbours.

New schemes of settlement and building-up new colonies are continuously occupying the attention of the Government. Defending the policy of the Government in the face of ultra-right criticism urging wider settlement in the newly occupied territories, the Prime Minister, L. Eshkol, said in the Knesset on December 11, 1968:

> The question of settlement is being dealt with by the Government, and not only being dealt with but it is being done. . . . And there are actions where silence about them serves the purpose better. . . .

The daily newspaper *Hayom* (of the Herut and Liberal parliamentary block now taking part in the coalition Government) reported on December 3, 1968:

> From the course of the debate and from the speeches of the Ministers in yesterday's meeting it becomes clear that most of the members of Government support extensive colonisation in the liberated territories. Part of them believes that Israel has to implement its historical and national right in Palestine because of reasons of security; another part feels that, as at

(Continued on page 74)

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Gulliver in the Land of Brobdingnag

The above pictures are of the Sean Kenny production of 'Gulliver's Tr Jonathan Swift's novel has been widely acclaimed. Swift wrote his own liberty.'

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Scientists of Laputa demonstrate a machine

t the Mermaid Theatre, Puddle Dock, London. This brilliant adaptation of — 'Traveller, go, and imitate if you can his strenuous vindication of man'

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> any event there is no advance in Jarring's mission, one has to proceed to colonise the territories; yet another part thinks that in the situation of political stagnation now prevailing, Israel must create *faits accomplis* which in future will prevent any violation of its security interests. . . .

Conducting such a policy means in fact consciously rejecting a peaceful settlement and choosing continuous enmity and bloodshed. Many people, hitherto drunk with chauvinism and military victory, are now showing restlessness at the lack of perspective for peace and the continuous bloodshed. The militarists in Israel try to cover up their responsibility for this desperate state of affairs by trying to convince the people that there is no other way out. Addressing a cadet-officers' graduation ceremony, M. Dayan said:

> We have been condemned to live in a state of continuous war with the Arabs, and there is no escape from bloody sacrifices. This is the reality, and if we are anxious to continue with our work against the will of the Arabs, we are compelled to take into consideration these sacrifices. . . . (*Ha'aretz*, August 2, 1968.)

The Israeli rulers, having brought the Gunnar Jarring mission to a standstill, plan to keep what they have seized. They hope that with the help of imperialist backing, using their own military superiority and exploiting the various weaknesses of the Arab countries, they will succeed through a high-handed policy of oppression in changing even the demographic character of the occupied territories. They are bent on carrying out their annexationist plans even if this would mean another catastrophic war.

(In the concluding section of this article which will be published next month, the writer shows the counter-forces, which can make possible a peaceful solution.)

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The Commonwealth Conference

CONFERENCE OF CONFLICT

Idris Cox

FROM March 1961 to September 1966 there were six conferences of Commonwealth Premiers, one every year except in 1963, but made up with two conferences in 1966. The long gap between the last two conferences was due to the continued desperate attempts of Harold Wilson to get a suitable 'formula' which Ian Smith would accept as a 'solution' for the illegal regime, which is based on white minority rule.

Harold Wilson was so confident that the complicated formula which emerged from the talks on board HMS Fearless last October would be acceptable to Ian Smith that he did not bother to postpone the date of the conference any further. In the event, Smith and his 'Cabinet' raised objection to some of the basic proposals put forward, and Wilson was obliged to face the conference without any agreement.

Rhodesia was the main issue of conflict in the conference of September 1966, taking up most of the time. The final communiqué then made clear that the great majority of Commonwealth Premiers were utterly opposed to the Wilson policy on Rhodesia. This time only two days were set aside for the conference discussion on Rhodesia, but during the eight days of January 7-15 there were many unofficial meetings, and in the last two days it was the most controversial subject which gave rise to fierce debate in drafting the final communiqué.

However, there was far more public interest in the activities outside the conference in opposition to the Wilson policy on Rhodesia than the discussion inside. The brazen step taken by Smith to order the illegal Rhodesian flag to fly above Rhodesia House in the Strand (not far from the British Parliament, and within sight of Government buildings and offices in Whitehall) caused deep resentment.

In response to the growing indignation, Jim Brookshaw, a leading young communist, made a precarious climb to the top and tore down the flag. The police restored it, but a few days later it was torn down again by two young climbers. This time it was witnessed by a huge demonstration which had marched from Hyde Park to occupy

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Rhodesia House in protest. They were prevented by a massive police barrier, but it took several hours to disperse the demonstrators.

Before the first day of the conference there was an all-night vigil outside the hall, daily pickets in which Africans and British citizens joined hands, and a large group of well-known writers occupied Rhodesia House while the conference was in session. No less than 700 police were mobilised to guard the conference hall and to break up the numerous protest demonstrations. No wonder *The Times* correspondent in Rhodesia made the comment:

> The conference did not attract great attention here, though the London demonstration outside Rhodesia House and South Africa House made headlines. (*The Times*, January 17, 1969)

What did the conference achieve on Rhodesia? It was known in advance that the British Government reserved its sole prerogative to deal with this problem. Commonwealth Premiers could express their views, but they had no right to decide British policy. All the same, even this was of considerable value, if only to underline once more that the Wilson policy was in open defiance of the majority of Commonwealth countries.

The 'Fearless' proposals were opposed by 23 out of the 28 Commonwealth countries at the conference—only Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malawi, and Malta were in favour. True, there were some others (like Malaysia and Singapore) that made a somewhat conciliatory stand, but there was no doubt of the general view. This was made clear in the first reference in the final communiqué on Rhodesia, which condemned political repression of the Africans and the 'increasing trends towards an apartheid system' and made clear that the 'heads of government reiterated the principles and objectives affirmed at their four previous meetings.'

There was a forthright condemnation of the 'Fearless' proposals. They were declared 'unacceptable as the constitution of an independent Rhodesia, and should therefore be withdrawn.' But as soon as the conference was over, Wilson declared that 'the door was still open' and the proposals were still 'on the table' for Ian Smith to pick up at any time.

Wilson did not deny he was breaking the NIBMAR pledge ('no independence without majority rule') but again repeated the old confidence trick of aiming for 'a settlement consistent with the six principles laid down by successive British Governments.' There is nothing in these principles which guarantees 'unimpeded progress to majority rule.' Even if Smith took no steps to prevent this, it would take more than 30 years to achieve it in present conditions.

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Wilson did make one small concession. If the proposed Royal Commission felt unable to decide whether the proposals met with the wishes 'of the Rhodesian people as a whole' it would be free to recommend any alternative method, including a referendum, to test Rhodesian opinion. The majority of Commonwealth Premiers gave a clear answer (recorded in the communiqué) to this empty gesture:

> Many heads of government urged that this could only be carried out through the normal democratic process of election or referendum, and doubted whether adequate safeguards for free political expression and verification of the results could be provided as long as the rebel government remained in power.

President Kaunda still urged that British military force should be used to overthrow the illegal Smith regime, and again offered Zambia as a base for these military operations. President Nyerere warned that Tanzania would leave the Commonwealth if a settlement was made on the basis of the 'Fearless' proposals. At the same time, it seems clear that the Zimbabwe freedom fighters will intensify their armed liberation struggle to end white minority rule.

They are not alone. The weekend after the conference of Commonwealth Premiers there was a far more important conference in Khartoum, organised jointly by the Afro-Asian Solidarity Movement, the Liberation movements in southern Africa and in Portuguese Guinea, and the World Peace Council. It is only in the context of this united struggle that white minority rule will come to an end.

The conference of Commonwealth Premiers was not confined to discussions on Rhodesia. It approved the British-sponsored resolution of November 1967 on the Middle East, adopted by the UN Security Council. There was a general exchange on disarmament, but also serious concern on the military situation in south-east Asia; and Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore will have a conference in May to consider concerted action.

There were sharp exchanges on the problem of Asian immigration to Britain from East Africa. When their countries became independent they were urged to retain their British passports. The governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, are pledged to a policy of 'Africanisation', but have long urged all non-Africans to become naturalised citizens of their country.

On almost every issue there is little or no unity within the Commonwealth. As long as Britain is the centre of a vast imperialist system there will be sharper conflicts, and the solution will only be found by united action of the millions within the Commonwealth against the common enemy.

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BRITAIN'S RESPONSIBILITY AND AFRICAN ACTION

Kotsho L. Dube
Zimbabwe African People's Union
Representative in the UK and Europe

NONE was victorious; no one sought any sense of victory over anyone on any of the topics that were discussed; now the Conference is over. The Commonwealth Heads of State and Government, by the look of things, had frank and forthright exchanges on the vexing subject of Rhodesia. One must assume that most of them were agreed that the racist minority regime in Rhodesia is and must remain an international outlaw until a representative government is substituted in its place. There would then remain the question of responsibility for bringing about the correct solution. Her Majesty's Government has maintained a consistent policy of 'no use of force.' We are able to note that the same said Government of the UK has once more reiterated that the task of solution-seeking remains the responsibility of the Government of England. The problem has thus been fully embraced as Britain's baby-child. The African governments and those of Asia are therefore correct in insisting that Britain adopt effective measures to end minority rule in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). The results have been staggeringly disappointing and in the absence of any other meaningful joint Commonwealth initiative the challenge must revert to the African people of Zimbabwe, who in the final analysis ought to bear the greater, more painful burden of effecting change. The warnings by President Kaunda on the imminence of a blood-bath in southern Africa are relevant revelations of the inevitable that must ensue from Britain's policy of appeasement in the area. That the proportions of the conflagration stretch beyond Rhodesia's borders is evidenced by South Africa's increasing involvement beyond her own frontiers, and the aggressive policies of Portuguese colonialism are a positive contribution to the worsening of the situation in the area generally. The challenge has therefore assumed international characteristics. It is therefore right that the United Nations addresses itself to this problem and the Commonwealth countries are individually and collectively interested in contributing to what must constitute a correct solution.

The Commonwealth leaders met against the background of a set

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of British devised principles on Rhodesia, notable among which is that there would be 'no independence before majority rule'. It is worthy of note that the NIBMAR principle was extracted from a reluctant Britain during the previous Conference. What has happened since that undertaking points to a rebuttal by Britain of what the international community considers fundamental to a just settlement of the constitutional imbalance in Rhodesia. The world has since been treated to a series of goings and comings by British ministers and Commonwealth Office officials, culminating at different times in deliberately staged negotiations between Her Majesty's Government and the racist regime. The character of the document which Britain considers the basis for settlement attests to an unashamed abandonment of NIBMAR. Mr. Wilson's maintenance of the Fearless document should now have satisfied him that the NIBMAR principle has been effectively thrown overboard. His Government must now be in no doubt about the opposition of the African people of Zimbabwe and the twenty-odd Commonwealth states. The NIBMAR bluff has exploded and now the UN and the OAU must reaffirm their support of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. The role of nations now should be the direction of material support to the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe.

The discussion exercise during the last Conference has been more revealing than at any other time before. The African people of Zimbabwe have been able fully to assess the support from individual states. The belief that the British Government is in league with the racist regime has been vindicated by her more than passionate belief in the Fearless formula. The position has not changed a bit. The Africans of Zimbabwe are demanding and insisting on no more than what is theirs by right. May I hereunder state the conditions the simultaneous fulfilment of which could lead to a peaceful solution of the Rhodesian problem.

1. Immediate and unconditional release of all freedom-fighters condemned to death and all others in detention and restriction camps.
2. Free and unfettered conditions for Mr. Joshua Nkomo to take full charge and conduct of all the affairs of the African people in order to bring about immediate unqualified majority rule.
3. Dissolution of the racist minority regime and all its institutions.
4. Drawing up of an unqualified majority rule constitution, free from elements of race, class or tribal distinction.
5. Reconstruction of the army, police and administration so that these correspond with the principles and purposes of popular government.

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6. All racist and reactionary laws must cease to have effect and must be expunged from the statute.

It is clear that the Commonwealth countries have now exhausted all forms of pressure to change Britain's policy of neglect of the African people of Zimbabwe. We also have no illusions about the African people of Zimbabwe being the decisive factor in the liberation of our country; it is nonetheless our hope that the international community in the Commonwealth, OAU and the UN will continue to reject fraudulent constitutional arrangements that are an endorsement and legalisation of the minority regime and its policies of repression.

Towards the Lenin Centenary

Lenin to Stalin on Book Publishing

I have just received the book *Materialy po istorii franko-russkikh za 1910-1914 gody.**

This massive tome of 733 pages has been published with that disgraceful truly Soviet slovenliness which ought to be punished by imprisonment. The price is not indicated. The responsible person or persons are not named. There is no index!! The simple *list* of names has been compiled *carelessly*. And so on.

I suggest that:

(1) Hanecki and Karakhan be given two days in which to find all the persons responsible for this publication,
(2) hold up the sale of the book,
(3) write a notice to be inserted in the book to indicate what is missing,
(4) and draw up an intelligible index; in short, that by Thursday they should submit a *brief* report to the Central Committee on all these monstrosities—the defects in the publication, and on the ways of correcting them.

Lenin

P.S.—M. N. Pokrovsky is named in the 'Preface'—which is *unsigned*! He has worked on *compiling* the material but it is obvious that he is not responsible for the *publication*, for the *way* the book has been put out.

Letter of Lenin 'To Comrade Stalin (for the Political Bureau)' April 15, 1923, published for the first time in Lenin, *Collected Works*, English edition, Vol. 33, p. 344.

* 'Documents on the History of Franco-Russian Relations 1910-1914.'

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MANAGERS—THE FIGHT FOR SECURITY

Muriel Turner

National officer, Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs

'THE Board and I have decided that we don't like the colour of your eyes' . . . This headline announcement to an advertisement in *The Times* signalled that a trade union—the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs—had decided to go into battle on behalf of a section of its members rendered particularly vulnerable by developments of the past 18 months. For what has been euphemistically called 'the restructuring of our society,' 'the technological revolution' and so on—and which results in mergers on the AEI/GEC model—has made clear to many employees in managerial, scientific and technical posts that their erstwhile security has been largely illusory.

Towards the end of 1968, the First Secretary of State for Employment and Productivity asked the Prices and Incomes Board to examine 'the general question of what principles should govern development in industry and commerce of salary structures for managerial, executive, professional and technical staff, especially in the light of the prices and incomes policy.'

ASTMS decided to submit evidence to the Board, and the purpose of *The Times* advertisement was to announce this fact to employees covered by the PIB reference and to ask them to write to us. The decision to put in evidence to the Board in no way indicates support for the Government's prices and incomes policy—indeed it is part of our intention, in submitting evidence, to indicate once again our belief that the policy itself is unworkable and indeed inequitable. Our main purpose is to highlight the grievances of a large and important section of our membership and indeed of contemporary society, and to suggest possible reforms.

On the day the advertisement appeared the office switchboard was jammed with incoming calls and we received almost 2,000 letters in the first week after the insertion. Many of these letters told a pretty sorry story. Unexpected dismissals after years of loyal service—and with no compensation—mergers which had resulted in numbers of senior employees manoeuvring and intriguing for much reduced appointments—a kind of jungle warfare in which

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all too often the over forty-five-year-olds went to the wall. Many people in these categories of employment are at last beginning to realise that they are employees like everyone else and that a trade union to protect their interests is as essential for them as it is for the worker on the shop floor.

What are the sort of reforms we should like to see? First, *all* employees are entitled to a great deal more security than exists at present. There is a case, (already argued by the Donovan Commission) for some form of appeals machinery to which dismissed employees could have recourse. Such an appeals tribunal should also have the power to order reinstatement, in order to prevent victimisation of trade unionists. Secondly, employees should be entitled to have their terms and conditions of employment set out unambiguously and in writing if they wish it.

The Contracts of Employment Act does not really assist in this regard, since it is not incumbent on the employer to provide these written particulars of employment at the point of engagement—he has up to 13 weeks from the date of engagement to do it. Thirdly, on salaries themselves, we shall seek to show that the acquisition of special skills and the assumption of responsibility tend to be undervalued in the UK compared to similar work in other developed countries.

Fourthly, it is in our view quite meaningless to talk about productivity and yet to provide so little incentive for the employee-inventor. Patent law in this country has been under review for the past twenty-two years, and the situation broadly speaking is still that the full benefits of any invention by an employee accrue in law totally to the employer. The attitude of employers as a whole has been to secure the maximum profits for themselves for inventions made by their employees rather than to encourage inventions by giving adequate rewards to those making or participating in them. Legislation exists in a number of European countries to ensure some benefit to the employee-inventor, and there seems no reason why Britain should not follow this example.

Pension Schemes play a considerable part in negotiations undertaken by most unions nowadays. It has always been our view that the contributions made by employers to pension schemes are a form of deferred salary—certainly it has been quite common for employees in non-manual employment to accept a lower rate of salary because a job is pensionable. It therefore seems only fair and proper that an employee who has had to leave employment for one reason or another should be able to take his pension entitlement with

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him and should not be disadvantaged from a pension point of view because he has to change his job in middle life.

Finally, there is the right of an employee to belong to a trade union if he wishes to do so. Many employers look askance on trade union organisation among their employees 'on the staff' and do their very best to discourage it, including victimisation of trade union activists and refusal to recognise or negotiate with the union. One positive feature of the Donovan Report was its insistence of the right of all employees—at all levels—to belong to trade unions if they wished, and on the obligation of the employers to recognise and negotiate with those unions.

These then are some of the reforms for which we are campaigning. Certain of them—dismissals procedure, trade union recognition, transferability of pension rights, could and should be accomplished by appropriate legislation. But these reforms are rights in themselves, which are long overdue, and should not be presented to the movement as part of a 'package deal' containing measures which will undermine our capacity to look after our members' interests. In that, as in so many other things, non-manual and manual unions must stand together.

SOVIET MERCHANT SHIPPING

Commander Edgar P. Young
R.N. Retired

THE sending of two missile-carrying warships into the Black Sea on December 9 was patently a deliberate act of provocation. It was a very stupid one, moreover, since it must have embarrassed Turkey, rather than encouraged her, as was presumably intended, and was patently ineffective from a naval point of view. What gave it nasty significance, however, is that it was described as being 'in retaliation'—in retaliation for increased Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranian!

Now naval presence in any waters, assuming that it is not designed for aggressive or coercive purposes, can be justified only where important lines of sea communications of the country concerned pass through those waters. This can hardly be claimed by the US, in respect of their very considerable naval presence in the Mediterranean. It can be claimed, however, by the USSR, just as it used

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to be claimed by Britain, in the days when her life lines to India and the Far East passed through the Suez Canal, a claim which is fading *pari passu* with her abandonment of her commitments 'East of Suez' and, more immediately, with the closing of the Suez Canal. Since comparison of the naval strengths in the Mediterranean of the USSR and Nato makes it clear that the former could not be used there aggressively, it would seem probable that the *real* objection to their increased presence there is the increased passage of Soviet merchant ships which justifies it.

This explanation is borne out by the spate of articles and comment in our press and over our radio about the alleged 'threat' to our prosperity, and even to our security, as a maritime nation, represented by the recent and projected expansion of the Soviet merchant fleet and, more recently, by its appearance on certain sea routes where it is in competition—indeed in 'unfair' competition, it is pretended—with our own. This is a subject on which public opinion here is properly and understandably very sensitive, so that allegations of the type just noted cannot fail to stir up anti-Soviet sentiment. 'Everyone gets worked up about wars that might happen because of Russian naval moves in the Mediterranean,' a British shipowner is quoted in *The Guardian* of December 11 as having said, 'but they forget that on the freight side the war has already started.' 'The Russians intend, wherever possible', wrote *The Times* editorially on December 2, 'to undercut commercial shipping rates so as to capture as much traffic as possible. . . . Western economies, with their higher standard of living, cannot offer the cheap rates with quite the same abandon as that displayed by the Russians.'

Looking at the situation from another viewpoint, however, *The Wall Street Journal* of November 18 headed its feature article on the subject: 'Russia's Merchant Ships Ranging Afar, Peril West's Monopoly on Ocean Trade.' This, in fact, is what is biting British shipowners in particular, and the matter has been brought to a head by the appearance on the Europe-Australia route of a Soviet passenger-liner, the *Shota Rustaveli*, and then of Soviet cargo-ships, quoting rates which are substantially lower than those charged by British and other shipowners.

Among the arguments put forward against this development are (a) that these rates are 'not commercial', i.e. that they are subsidised; (b) that the number of ships which it is proposed to run on the latter service, i.e. carrying freight, are more than are justified by the actual volume of trade exchanges between the USSR and Australia, which means that they will be carrying goods for capitalist

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shippers; and (c) that the Soviet Ministry of the Merchant Marine 'don't appear at all interested in joining existing rate Conferences, and are using their excessive capacity to unleash a vicious rate war that would quickly drive privately-owned ship operators to the wall' (this is what was told to *The Wall Street Journal* by 'a spokesman of the international Chamber of Shipping, representing 19 maritime nations, handling about 65 per cent of the world's active ship tonnage). These complaints refer not only to the Australia trade, I would add here, but also to that with Canada, Latin America and the Far East, and especially to that with the developing countries.

I will preface my answer to the foregoing charges by stating that the recent and projected expansion of the Soviet merchant fleet, and indeed of that of all the maritime members of the Warsaw Pact, is roughly proportionate to the expansion of their economy and of their overseas trade. It does not, and is evidently not intended to, cover by any means the whole of their requirements for sea transport. What this means to foreign shipowners may be gathered from the fact that the freight carried to and from Soviet ports in their ships went up from 29.7 million tons, out of a total of 49.8 million tons, in 1960, to 59.7 million tons, out of a total of 121 million tons, in 1967. This situation has been maintained in 1968 and seems likely to be maintained *ad infinitum*, because the Soviet authorities responsible observe the rules of good ship management and are not so foolish, as was pointed out by their Minister in London a few years ago, as to try to economise on foreign exchange by sending ships out to Australia on ballast to bring home wool, but prefer to use foreign ships.

Working in accordance with the rules of good ship management, however, the Soviet authorities use computers to determine how their ships may be used most profitably, and it goes without saying that, in doing this, due account is taken of the valuable contribution towards the preservation of trade balance that can be made by shipping services, in the shape of what are called 'invisible exports.' For British shipowners, above all, to protest that Soviet shipping services to and from, say, Australia are in excess of Soviet trade with that country is therefore disingenous. It may indeed be argued, to the contrary, that Soviet acquisition of foreign exchange, and especially in hard currencies, by shipping services is of advantage to all countries which want to sell industrial and other goods to the USSR.

As regards 'fair competition' on the various trade routes, it should be pointed out that until recently these have been monopolised by various sections of the 19 maritime nations of the West, which include

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Liberia, most of whose merchant ships, according to *The Wall Street Journal*, 'actually are controlled by US industrial companies.' These have grouped themselves into so-called 'Conferences,' which are intended to be exclusive. These 'Conferences' have been able to impose freight rates which, while advantageous to their members, are disadvantageous to the clients whom they profess to 'serve', and which, as was stated repeatedly at an UNCTAD conference in India earlier this year, have been prohibitive to the economic advancement of the developing countries.

The USSR, when proposing to enter the trade in any theatre, has always attempted to avoid bad feeling by applying to join the appropriate 'Conference,' as has been done most recently in relation to Australia. Its entry has usually been refused, in the first place, and where it has later been accepted this has been done with ill grace, because the alternative has been even more distasteful to the monopolists, for the reason, not always stated, but always understood, that it would not stand for rates which are 'unrealistic,' as has been the case with Australia, or which are economically disastrous for the developing countries.

If one looks at this matter from the other end of the telescope, therefore, one cannot but regard the appearance of a competitive Soviet merchant fleet on the world shipping market as of direct advantage to all people concerned with the production of goods for export and with their overseas shipment. This is proved by the following quotations from among others to the same effect *The Wall Street Journal* article mentioned earlier: 'Some industrial companies in England and on the Continent frankly concede that they have switched to Russian ships because they are cheaper. *Like the Russians*, they complain that Conference rates are "unrealistic" and monopolistic.'

The allegation that the rates being quoted by the USSR are 'uneconomic' is understandable as coming from shipowners who know that the wages and conditions of those serving in Soviet merchant ships are far superior to those which they concede to their own employees. It is not tenable, though, when one notes that the profits earned by the Soviet merchant fleet doubled between 1959 and 1965, and that, like all other enterprises in the USSR, it is compelled to be self-supporting. The only 'unfair advantage' which Soviet ships enjoy over their capitalist competitors is that they probably secure their fuel, from the Soviet oil companies, at prices much lower than the 'Gulf Prices' imposed on the latter by the capitalist oil monopolies on which they choose to depend.

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UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ON FORSTER

James Aldridge

E. M. FORSTER, who has just celebrated his 90th birthday, has always set something of a problem for Marxist critics. While admiring the sensitive and decent man and enjoying his work, there are many unanswered questions which, some day, will have to be answered by a worthwhile study of him.

I think he is the nearest thing English literature has to Henry James. This is odd because he disliked James and even developed his simple style and his 'ordinary' form of character conversation in deliberate opposition to what Cyril Connolly has called the mandarin language of the great Victorians, including James. Forster modelled his style on Jane Austen and Proust whom he considers as his liberator.

It has been said, and only recently, that Forster is not strictly in the English tradition because he writes so much about other societies. English critics who say that (and some are quite illustrious) are usually dyed-in-the-wool parochials who always prefer what Mary McCarthy has called a certain 'smallness' in English writing to any largesse or outside view. Like Henry James, Forster always tried to move his English characters into the outside world, developing them by juxtaposition with other societies, either Italian or Indian. In doing so he gives all his English sensibilities un-English wings.

Yet one feels that somehow he is being dragged back by a parochial parachute, the very thing he hated, and it tries to hold him in and sometimes does so. It is interesting in this regard to remember that he influenced and even inspired the most parochial of our modern writers—the Bloomsbury set. They all admired Forster excessively.

Forster has always been a liberal man. I mean a nineteenth century liberal man, not what is so delightfully called liberal today. As an old-fashioned liberal Forster was not as unpolitical as many of his present-day supporters like to make him out to be. I don't mean in his novels necessarily, I mean in his own life. In 1921, for instance, he wrote a remarkable pamphlet on Egypt for the Labour Research Department.* In it he gave an analysis of imperialism and

*He was one of the array of distinguished contributors, alongside Leonard Woolf, H. N. Brailsford, Norman Angel, Erskine Childers and others, to the Labour International Handbook, edited by R. Palme Dutt, published by *Allen and Unwin* in 1921—again for the section on Egypt.

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Egypt's colonial struggle against it that one would like to see today in 'liberal' journals like the *New Statesman*. His own position on India was instant Home Rule. There is no doubt that his best book, 'A Passage to India,' influenced many people in the 1920s to take a sort of Cripps-Mountbatten view of Indian affairs. India today, good or bad, is the result.

But his fictional portrait of India in this book has come in for some sharp criticism from Indians themselves. His Indian protagonist Aziz has been rejected by many Indians as 'your white man's burden, not ours.' The proper estimation of the book will have to come to grips with Aziz in his own context, not in the English one.

There is no space here to develop any of this. All one can suggest is that it would be doing Forster a service if a good Marxist critic really looked at his work deeply and honestly and put aside the easy, modern, middle-aged weakness among some of us for the so-called liberal and humanist point of view. Forster ought to be saved from that sort of respectable churchyard.

MANAGING EDITOR - AN ANNOUNCEMENT

OWING to the offer of an important writing assignment requiring his full-time activity, our Managing Editor Roger Woddis has asked to be released from his responsibilities on the magazine. We regret that this commission has made Roger's departure necessary, and we would like to express our warm appreciation of the valuable service which he has rendered to the journal during his eighteen-month term as Managing Editor.

This post is shortly to become vacant, and we invite applications for this position from anyone who possesses a broad, intimate knowledge of the labour movement, a sound grasp of Marxism and the ability to contribute practical ideas on the contents of the magazine and its future development. The post offers ample opportunity for creative and constructive work in close association with the Editor, and for the continuous exercise of political initiative.

Applicants are asked to submit fullest particulars, giving their age, political background and experience, contact with the labour movement, cultural interests, how long they have been readers of *LM*, and any other information they consider relevant.

All applications will be carefully considered, and an announcement made when the new Managing Editor has been appointed.

Editorial Board

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TWO AMERICAN MUSICALS

'Hair' (Stage): **Stephen Sedley**

Hair is said to have had a story in its native off-off-Broadway theatre about a boy who is so sorry for his friend who has just been drafted for Vietnam that he lets him sleep with his girl friend. Now in London at the Shaftesbury, it has no such inhibiting elements. It starts half an hour late and ends an hour late. The rock band plays on stage, people come in and introduce themselves, have arguments and scenes with each other, dance like mad, sing voluminously, and fear the death's-head in GI uniform who finally emerges from among them.

Although it has no discernible plot, *Hair* has a philosophy—a sad and elementary philosophy of live and let live. The whole show is a celebration of the postwar generation's *joie de vivre*, clouded periodically by the ever-looming threat of drafting for Vietnam. It goes no wider than that. What is chiefly wrong with Vietnam, for the *Hair* people, is that it interferes with their own lives; what is wrong with the adult American world is that it doesn't understand and tolerate them and their ideals.

In the short time that has passed since *Hair* was first staged, the bubble of hippy life in Haight-Ashbury has burst. Junkies have been beaten up or died; hippy girls have been raped or reclaimed by anxious parents. Living and letting live depends on the world outside too.

The result is that *Hair* is already history, a pickled slice of last year's life. But what life. Melody, beat, dance, singing, lighting, characters, all merge in an enthralling evening.

'Finian's Rainbow' (Film): **Roger Woddis**

WITH A FEW NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS film critics have dismissed 'Finian's Rainbow' as a mushy, sentimental piece of old whimsy. It is a pity that they seem to have overlooked (consciously perhaps?) what is really significent about this musical.

Sentimental it certainly is—after all, it *is* a fairy tale—but interlarded between the layers of sugar are slices of abrasive comment on the current American scene. This is a story not only about bright-eyed Irish colleens and leprechauns, but also about a bigoted Southern US senator who tries to foreclose on the hero's tobacco land and oust the sharecroppers. It sets its face squarely against racial intolerance and the watch-dogs of privilege.

The film has been called 'naive', but writers E. Y. Harburg and Fred Saidy are not suggesting that the evils of capitalism can be wished away by a pot of gold possessed of magical powers. That is to give a literal interpretation to a film that is essentially a symbolic fantasy. When Woody, the white hero, and Howard, his Negro friend, hug each other in triumph at the film's end, this is more than a joyous moment. It is a simple statement of their mutual dependence.

Director Francis Ford Coppola (not yet thirty) has brought vitality and a driving talent to the dance routines and songs, which range from the conventionally lyrical to the savagely satirical. Critics apart, most people will come away from this bubbling film with a sense of elation and unmindful of its flaws. The balance is on the credit side.

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CORRESPONDENCE:

Northern Ireland

MAY I BE ALLOWED to enlarge on one point made in Betty Sinclair's first article? (November 1968).

She mentions that the Northern Ireland government abolished Proportional Representation as soon as the Act allowed. This has had disastrous effects, and I do not think there will ever be peace in Northern Ireland until that action is reversed. In the first place, as Miss Sinclair says, the change to a majority system, as used in the rest of the United Kingdom, made gerrymandering easy. It also gives rise to suspicions of gerrymandering even when the government is innocent. The system also encourages the other forms of electoral malpractice which are rife in Northern Ireland (they are proud of being part of the UK, yet their electoral practice is generations behind ours). When the personation of relatively few voters can determine the representation of a whole constituency there is much more temptation to it than when—as under PR—the same number of bogus votes can affect, at most, one of the several seats in a constituency. Under PR, the number of votes that would have to be falsified to affect the result seriously is so large that the game becomes not worth the candle.

Probably the most serious matter, however, is that the single-seat system for election to Stormont greatly exacerbates hostility between Protestants and Catholics. Every government MP is a Protestant and, with rare exceptions, every opposition MP is a Catholic; therefore every political quarrel becomes also a religious one and *vice versa*, and when elections are (really or supposedly) rigged against the minority this is seen not only as political victimisation but also as religious persecution. Catholic Unionists exist, but the overwhelmingly Protestant Unionist Party cannot be expected ever to select one as its *sole* candidate in any constituency. But under PR it would have to select several, and could much more easily be persuaded to include one Catholic among them. That is how the Protestant minority in the Republic gets its fair share of seats through any party (one is even a Cabinet Minister), and so completely has religion died out of politics there that it is quite difficult to find out which are the non-Roman Catholic deputies!

Incidentally, the same applies to the selection of coloured candidates in this country—we had better reconsider our electoral system before we find unrepresented Negroes starting their own party.

ENID LAKEMAN.

(*This correspondent, who is Director of the Electoral Reform Society, will be contributing an article on 'Immigrants and the Vote' in our March issue—Ed.* LM.)

BOOKS

Television in Politics

Jay G. Blumler and Denis McQuail

Faber & Faber, 380 pp., 63s.

POLITICIANS JOSTLING FOR THE CHANCE of appearing on the box may be kidding themselves, according to the authors of this survey, if they think they are going to sway the result of a general election. The tele-audience is very sceptical about party political broadcasts, and would much prefer debates and confrontations. Those who watch a lot of the set-piece all-channel broadcasts are rated as the most sceptical: could it be that they are the compulsive viewers, fixed in

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their chairs, who see so many of these programmes because, even if they switch to another channel, they will only get the same simultaneous act?

The survey is based on the reactions of 748 electors in West Leeds and Pudsey round about the 1964 General Election. It finds the only noteworthy direct result of TV during this period to be the apparent fillip given to the Liberal vote—explained as due to the increased 'exposure' given to the Liberals compared with their previous obscurity as a minority party out of office for a generation. You may well ask, if the Liberals can get this free lift, why not other minority parties? The authors mention the laughable allocations of time given to the Communist and Scottish and Welsh Nationalist parties: they suggest more time might be available for minorities if party broadcasts did not have to go out on all channels at once. But they are not hopeful of reform when the conditions are set, as now, by a carve-up between the Tory and Labour whips.

The trouble with all surveys like this is the long time between the actual date of the survey and its publication. Here the 1966 election and the Tory legislation of the Labour Government have intervened. Even more significant is its limitation to a General Election. What about the long periods of 'exposure' between elections to special pleading, selective interviewing and slanted interpretation, which helps to build up the attitudes later expressed in a vote?

JUDITH TODD

The Making of British Foreign Policy
David Vital
Allen & Unwin, 120 pp., 25s.

THE AUTHOR SETS HIMSELF the twofold aim of describing how British foreign policy is in fact made, and introducing the reader to the art of 'foreign policy analysis.'

Why link the two subjects? Because it is believed that the content of British foreign policy is influenced by the manner of making it more than is usually suspected.

Mr. Vital makes the important point that in democratic Britain the conduct of foreign affairs is both in law and fact 'the undivided responsibility of the Executive—a Crown prerogative.' In democratic Britain also the Government is under no obligation to seek Parliamentary advice or consent for its foreign policy.

Whatever the origin of the policy—Parliament, press, academic institutions, the shadowy operation of the old boy network (or, the reviewer hastens to add, the great financial and industrial monopolies), it is the supreme committee of the Executive, the cabinet, that takes the decision to implement it.

This being so, democratic influence on foreign policy takes place largely in response to the impact of such policy on the domestic scene. Mr. Vital obviously does not think demonstrations and public protests have much effect, except in so far as 'the first business of a Government is to ensure its own survival.'

He recognises the important point that some foreign policies are more costly than others. But unfortunately he appears to hold the conviction that British public opinion, in preferring social welfare to the maintenance of large forces in Germany and East of Suez, is mistakenly reducing the effectiveness of Britain's role in the world.

To state the dilemma is good. But it must be said that in general Mr. Vital's assessment of Britain's needs does not differ from those of the bipartisan Conservative-Rightwing Labour experts of the quality Sunday

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newspapers. He believes Britain's security demands participation in Nato while admitting that invasion from the Soviet Union is unlikely. What is he then afraid of? One may guess. He believes the application to join the European Economic Community was actuated by concern for Britain's economic future.

He provides much information of considerable value, but it must be said that this is an attempt to look at foreign affairs from a non-class (hence a ruling class) point of view. The motives of neo-colonialism are to be deduced from his facts; they are not pinpointed or exposed. Britain's productivity rating is mentioned, along with her shipping and population ratings, but not her rating in foreign investments, one of the most vital determinants of foreign policy.

The book is freshly and competently written, but the reader will have to suffer an occasional donnishness, such unrecommended spellings as 'analyze' and freakish formations such as 'overview' for 'supervision.'

C. DESMOND GREAVES

The Affluent Worker: Political Attitudes and Behaviour

John H. Goldthorpe, David Lockwood, Frank Bechhofer, Jennifer Platt

Cambridge University Press, 96 pp., 30s.

LUTON IS A TOWN WHICH HAS EXPANDED enormously over the last 40 years since General Motors took over the Vauxhall factory. Many thousands of workers came from the depressed areas of Wales, Scotland, the North and Ireland in search of work, higher wages and homes. This immigration has continued since the war. Luton is a relatively affluent town despite the poverty of social and cultural amenities, although wages compared with those in the Midlands are nothing like as good as they were ten years ago.

But the relative affluence of the people makes Luton an ideal place to test the theory of *embourgeoisement*, according to which greater personal income, washing-machines, cars, home ownership, etc. makes workers middle-class and leads them to switch their allegiance to the Tories. This book summarises research aimed at doing just that. Result—no evidence of *embourgeoisement*. The voting histories of workers who certainly were and felt better off than in the past showed that they have been and continue to be notably staunch Labour supporters (the interviews took place in 1963; my guess is that today they would still be Labour *if* they voted, and the 'if' is a very big one).

The research showed that these workers still regarded themselves as working class and the Labour Party as a class Party. But even in 1963, one-third of the Labour workers felt that it would not make much difference which Party won the 1964 election, and only 55 per cent of Labour trade unionists approved of the present link between their party and the trade unions. This is a measure of the damage done to our movement by Right-Wing leadership.

Of course the theory of *embourgeoisement*, a sort of counterpart to the theory that capitalism and socialism are approaching one another or that classes are disappearing, has always been a puerile, superficial fantasy. As the authors point out 'despite his affluence, the worker's experience of the social divisions of the work-place, of the power and remoteness of management, and of his own inconsiderable chances of ever being anything but a manual wage-earner all generally dispose him

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to think of himself as a member of the class of "ordinary workers," and to seek collective rather than individualistic solutions to his problems.' It is up to the Left to point the way.

TONY CHATER

Anatomy of the Soviet Union
Edited by Harrison E. Salisbury
Nelson, 484 pp., 70s.

THIS 'HUGE 'BOOK is well printed, on thick paper, with lavish illustrations: and contains a mass of information on 22 different aspects of Soviet life—including 'a Soviet chronology, 1917-1967.' For these reasons it predisposes you at first sight in its favour.

But when you begin to read it, you are brought up sharp against the most extraordinary errors, not to say distortions—from the chronology onwards.

'No good Soviet history (of 1917) has yet been written': a number have appeared, notably the scholarly work of Academician Mintz. The famous 'Aurora' in the Neva, on November 6 that year, a 'Dreadnought': she is a light cruiser. Lenin decided not to govern with a coalition of other parties: he offered coalition to the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries for weeks, and ultimately persuaded them. A picture of the soldiers' and workers' demonstration in July, 1917, shot down by Kerensky's troops—famous for years, reproduced a hundred times—presented as: 'October 1917: people machine-gunned by the Bolsheviks.' Lenin 'bitterly disheartened' because revolution didn't come in the West—when all his arguments, from November 1917 until well on into the following spring, for peace with the Germans were based on the ridiculousness at that time of expecting it.

When we get to the picture of life in the Soviet Union today, the larding of information and misinformation—though the doses vary from chapter to chapter—is just as persistent. Even the collective farm market—dealing in surplus produce grown on State-owned land, with the help of tractors, chemicals, agricultural and veterinary science supplied by public enterprise: the market itself quietly 'regulated,' by releasing State-owned produce if its prices go too high—are described as 'a little island of free enterprise,' and 'an anomaly in the Soviet economy' (as though the Soviet economy, ever since collective farms appeared, has not always *planned* the development of such markets). And so on.

As a collective travelogue, to be taken with a good dose of caution, the book isn't as bad as some. But if students of political medicine relied on this 'anatomy of the Soviet Union,' they wouldn't pass their First MB.

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

The New Local Government System
Peter G. Richards
Allen & Unwin, 192 pp., 35s.

THIS NEW EDITION of a well-known and reliable textbook now goes beyond law and administration by taking in political and sociological aspects and, most important, discusses very fairly the many controversial issues current at this time of impending change in structure, finance and methods. In using the word 'New' in the book's title, Dr. Richards refers to changes yet to come, since there have been no changes of much moment for many a year.

Everyone likely to take part in discussion and decision over the changes which may be proposed in the forthcoming report of the Royal

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Commission on Local Government (and, in turn, by the Government) will find this clearly written and well-indexed little volume most useful.

T. V.

Bertrand Russell, Philosopher and Humanist

John Lewis

Lawrence & Wishart, 96 pp., 7s. 6d.

IN THIS SHORT BOOK Dr. Lewis directs attention away from Russell's personality, towards his philosophical, ethical and social thought. This policy, especially at the present time, is a valuable one.

Lewis sketches briefly the background to Russell's early logico-mathematical work, work which culminated in 1910-13 in the publication, with A. N. Whitehead as co-author, of *Principia Mathematica*. He outlines Russell's attack on Bradley's monistic philosophy, and deals at greater length with the construction of Russell's own pluralistic doctrine. He describes and appraises his subject's moral and social thought, and ends with a review and critique of his work as a whole.

The author attacks Russell's belief that there is no necessary connection between on the one hand his views on social and political questions, and on the other his views on logic and the theory of knowledge. For Lewis this 'suggests a surprising inconsistency between the philosopher and the humanist.' The inconsistency apparently has the following basis: while demanding certainty and opposing speculation in his philosophical work, while believing it undesirable that any proposition should be believed 'when there is no ground whatever for supposing it true,' Russell nevertheless considers value judgements to be subjectively based, and of course makes such judgements, often considering them 'something all men ought to feel' (Lewis). In fact, Russell admits the possibility that it is inconsistent to hold ethical valuations to be subjective, while allowing oneself 'emphatic opinions on ethical questions,' but declares that 'an inconsistent system may well contain less falsehood than a consistent one.'

To charge Russell merely with inconsistency between his philosophical and ethical views is to admit the possibility that one of these two sets of views may be correct; and this Lewis will not have.

He believes that Russell's philosophy fails because it is 'divorced from the stream of events in the ever-changing reality. Even as a logic it fails'; for even logic should not be reduced to 'a merely formal discipline.' (Russell does however himself write in his *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* that 'logic is concerned with the real world just as truly as zoology, though with its more abstract and general features.')

Lewis believes in addition that Russell is mistaken in considering ethical valuations to be subjective, and adds the comment that Russell's own life shows that moral judgements settled on an intuitive basis are variable; for though now well known for his activities in the peace movement, in 1946 he advocated an atomic war against Russia 'or we will have to lie down and let them govern us.'

In this connection Lewis writes that Russell was in the Munich period 'a fervent pacifist.' It should be made clear that while Russell has written that he 'hoped that a pacifist attitude would be possible in relation to the Nazis,' he adds that he never was a 'theoretical pacifist,' but always believed that some wars were justifiable.

GRAHAME LOCK

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Below Stairs

Margaret Powell

Peter Davies, 176 pp., 30s.

THE LABOUR AND HUMILIATIONS accepted as appropriate to domestic service as late as the 1920s must be almost beyond belief to the present generation.

This lively and brightly-written account of the life of one who graduated from scullery-maid to cook should be a painless and even enjoyable eye-opener to anyone under fifty, and a useful reminder to those over.

IVOR MONTAGU

Writers and Partisans

James Burkhart Gilbert

John Wiley & Sons, 304 pp., 66s.

JAMES BURKHART GILBERT, author of this 'History of Literary Radicalism in America' says it is not a history of *Partisan Review*, but rather 'a history of assumptions about literature and the role of the intellectual' as seen through the medium of the little magazines. However, the overwhelming bulk of its 303 pages deals with this journal and the checkered careers of its two editors, Philip Rahv and William Phillips.

In fairness to the author, he poses the problem of the role of the creative artist in a revolutionary movement, but fails to answer it, except in the limited history of Rahv and Phillips and the one-sided group of intellectuals gathered around Partisan Review.

While this literary journal and its editors had their origin in what is called the 'hopeful '30s', after the movement had shed the sectarianism of the 'proletcult' days of the late '20s, their abysmal ignorance of the roots of the class struggle, not to speak of Marxism, led them to early despair and discouragement.

Being locked away in an Ultra Leftism of their own, they then challenged the broader movement of the American Writers Congress. Quickly, they turned to Trotskyism and from there to anti-Stalinism, which ends up in an advocacy of the cold war.

These editorial twins, each in their own way, continue through life in a defeatist and disillusioned mood. They call for a separation of politics and literature; express frank scepticism about the role of literature in the revolutionary process; challenge the belief that man can really control history; and believe that history has left the intellectual stripped of hope and belief in progress.

Added to this dreary recital is the evolution of other Partisan Review associates, such as Dwight Macdonald, James Burnham, Sidney Hook and Granville Hicks, who all end up at the end of the same road.

The ideas of the author himself never come through clearly. In the preface he tells us his book stops in the early '50s because 'I do not wish . . . to pass judgment upon the present.' But eight pages before the end, in a footnote, the reader is told:—

'The relationship of the CIA to individuals who wrote for the *Partisan Review*' and its sponsorship after 1959 'by the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, raise the possibility that everything I have said in this book is misleading or irrelevant.'

To have made this observation by itself would have established in a self-critical manner his own lack of information about those through whom he had been expressing views on American literary radicalism.

But Mr. Gilbert goes on to assert: 'Men and ideas must be considered for what they are' and 'not for who pays their bills.' Either one must be extremely naive or a literary and political humbug to advance such apologies.

JOHN WILLIAMSON

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IMPATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

OURS is a world-wide readership, and it is especially heartening when we receive letters from our friends abroad telling us how much they value the magazine. One such came in recently from New York—'We would like to get Labour Monthly by air mail. This will cost us more, but your journal is too useful to be delayed.'

Patience is supposed to be a virtue, but we rate this impatience to hear what *LM* has to say even higher. It spurs us on to make even greater efforts to provide those in the forefront of the struggle with effective ammunition.

A Darlington reader expresses another kind of impatience. 'How long do we have to wait for Socialism in this "green and pleasant land?" I know we're building for the future, but I should like to see the first bricks laid in my lifetime.'

A cry from the heart. How soon we replace this ramshackle system by one that really corresponds to human needs depends on the growth of political awareness among our people. The answer to the old question, 'Why are we waiting?' is surely 'Because we haven't yet exerted all our strength.' Victory will not come by our waiting upon events.

Millions of workers are impatient to see the labour movement live up to its name and start to move in earnest. Action starts with knowledge. Give us the means to spread the socialist word, and we shall hasten the day when we begin to lay those first bricks.

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